

The President's Daily Brief

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11 August 1972

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Top Secret

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

South Vietnamese forces have gained some ground in the fighting for Quang Tri City. (Page 1)

Chinese

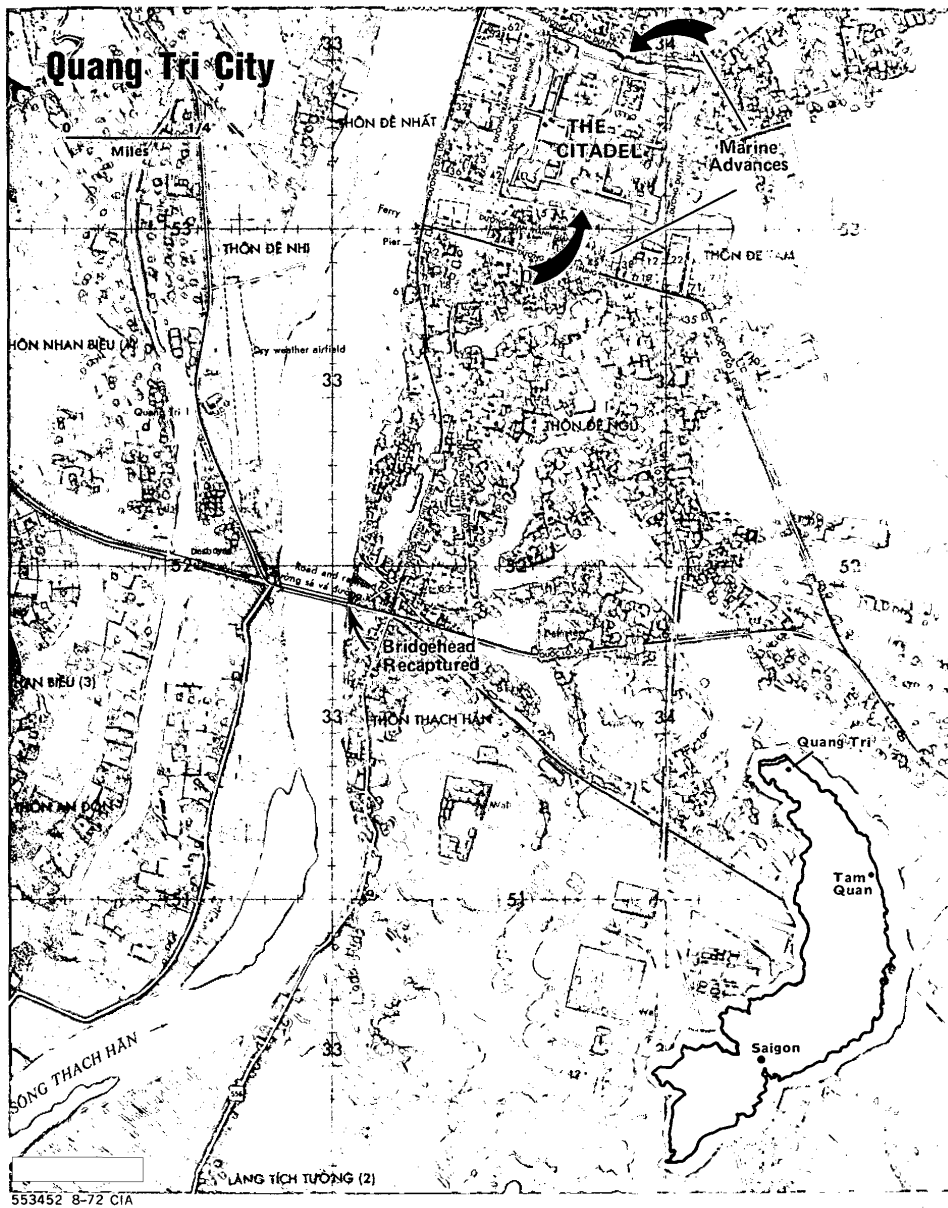
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[REDACTED] (Page 2)

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Bangkok is preparing for wide-ranging political discussions with the Chinese. (Page 3)

Pakistani President Bhutto's decision not to recognize Bangladesh largely reflects his domestic political problems. (Page 4)

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SOUTH VIETNAM

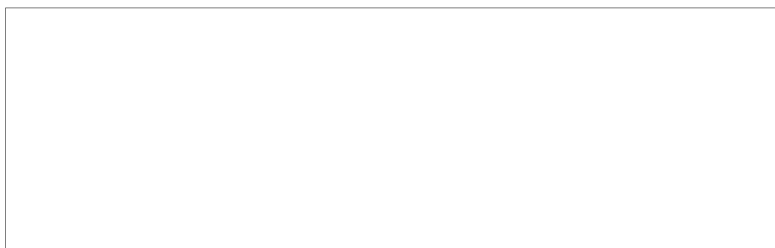
South Vietnamese forces have gained some ground in the fighting for Quang Tri City. South Vietnamese Marines have captured a key bridgehead in the southern sector of the city and are nearing both the northern and southern walls of the citadel.

The Communists clearly intend to continue the fight. They are still using massive artillery fire--which yesterday may have included some tear gas rounds--to slow the South Vietnamese operation. According to intercepts, their forces in the citadel continue to receive supplies. Moreover, elements of the North Vietnamese 308th Division, previously committed against the My Chanh defense line south of Quang Tri City, are now being used to bolster Communist defenses to the west of the citadel.

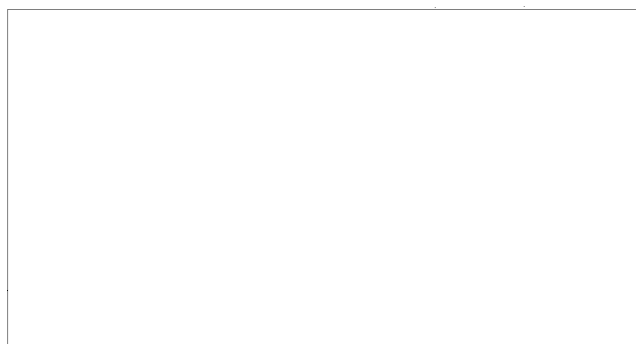
To the south, the Communists have attacked Tam Quan district capital in northern Binh Dinh Province. Of the three district capitals recently retaken by the government, Tam Quan is the only one in which the South Vietnamese have thus far maintained firm control.

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CHINA



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THAILAND-CHINA

[redacted] Bangkok is preparing for wide-ranging political discussions with the Chinese in connection with the forthcoming visit of a Thai ping-pong team to Peking. Prasit

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Bangkok is prepared to state that Taiwan is a part of China and that Peking is the sole legitimate government of China.

[redacted] *The Chinese will recognize it as an indication of Thai seriousness in pursuing better relations, and they are likely to respond positively.*

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The Thai will seek some assurance that the Chinese will not use their presence in Thailand to foment anti-government sentiment in the country's large ethnic Chinese community.

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[redacted]

The insurgency question could prove to be a major stumbling block because, in the Thai view, the threat is growing and Chinese support of the insurgents is evidence of Peking's attitude toward Thailand. Peking could well make at least some gesture on the insurgency question.

The Indochina war--and Thailand's part in it--remains a problem for the Chinese. They are unlikely to enter into formal relations with Bangkok without some kind of Thai assurances that US forces in the country will in time be reduced at least to the pre-1964 levels.

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PAKISTAN-BANGLADESH

President Bhutto has announced that Pakistan will not recognize Bangladesh, citing as the reason Prime Minister Mujib's refusal to meet with him.

Bhutto's decision primarily reflects his domestic political problems. He fears that recognition, unless accompanied by Bengali concessions on such things as trying Pakistanis for war crimes, would be unpopular with significant segments of the population, including members of his own party.

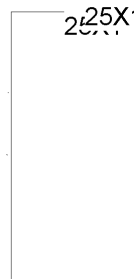
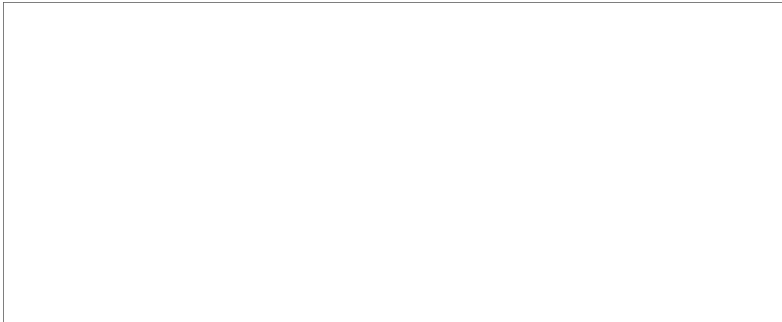
Another major concern is that the increasingly active opposition parties would use recognition as one more stick with which to beat the government. Bhutto is particularly wary of stirring up new trouble in the Punjab. Most Pakistani prisoners of war are Punjabis, and the opposition would almost surely charge that recognition of Bangladesh now would make it harder to negotiate the return of prisoners and to bargain with Dacca to reduce the number of trials.

In his announcement, Bhutto also asserted that the Chinese will veto Bangladesh's request for membership in the UN.

In recent weeks, Peking has appeared to be moving in this direction, and it is unlikely that Bhutto would have made his statement without some assurance that Peking would back him up.

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NOTE



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